

AS/AG/kl

Friday 17th July 2020

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Dear Parent/Carer,

Following the release of guidance from JCQ, the regulatory organisation that oversees the administration of the A Level and GCSE exams in England, we would like to clarify the position regarding the awarding of subject grades this summer.

### Methodology used to award GCSE and A level grades

Exam grades have been awarded by exam boards this summer through a methodology established by Ofqual, the organisation that regulates the exam boards. Centres were asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each subject, which were to be solely based on existing evidence. The information requested was as follows:

- Centre Assessment Grades - the grades they believed students were most likely to achieve in their examinations
- Rank Orders - within each subject, the order of students, by performance, for each grade.

The standardisation system also considers the results of the school or college over time and students' prior attainment to determine whether the Centre Assessment Grades submitted were more generous or severe than predicted. This process allows for the standardisation of grades across schools and colleges to ensure that results are aligned across the cohort. Awarding bodies have produced calculated grades, based in part on information submitted by the school, but following closely the guidance produced by Ofqual which defines how a statistical model is used to arrive at the final grades. These grades may, therefore, differ significantly from those submitted by the centre. You may find this brief video produced by Ofqual useful in understanding the process:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBu7xS7SRIU1-vCDZPrVzDA>.

### Differences between Centre Assessment Grades and final grades

It was not possible to create a nationally standardised method for the generation by teachers of the Centre Assessment Grades this summer, there simply was not the time. Instead, in the interests of fairness, it was necessary for exam boards to standardise the judgements of centres in order to make sure that, at a national level, grade distributions in summer 2020 were broadly in line with previous years.

As a result of this process some schools may experience some adjustments to their Centre Assessment Grades. The extent of any difference a centre might experience may vary between subjects because standardisation was conducted at a subject level, not at centre level: for example, the standardisation of GCSE English language was not affected by the standardisation of GCSE History.

We would like to reassure you that:

1. Teachers know their students well and centres like Farlingaye are able to assess grades with a high degree of accuracy.
2. The grades submitted by Farlingaye to the exam boards, as with other centres, were agreed by the centre following an internal quality assurance process and are not the sole responsibility of any individual teacher.

3. The standardisation process applied by the exam boards ensures grades awarded this year are consistent with those awarded to other cohorts in other years. This was the fairest possible approach available under extreme circumstances. It is a rigorous process which means that grades awarded this year are as valid as in any other year.
4. The process used to generate final grades will allow students to progress to the next stage of their lives in the normal way.

For questions about exam results, please email [resultsenquiries@farlingaye.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:resultsenquiries@farlingaye.suffolk.sch.uk) or phone the main school reception on 01394 385720, and someone will help you as soon as possible. Please note that the school will be closed for a period during the summer holidays but you should be able to access support following the Results' Days.

You can request to see the Centre Assessment Grade that the school submitted to the awarding body. However, you should be mindful that the Centre Assessment Grade was only part of the calculation that formed your child's final grade and that the school will have already reviewed your child's calculated results prior to your child receiving them. Centre Assessment Grades may have been adjusted up or down during the awarding bodies' standardisation process. When students are considering whether or not to request to see their Centre Assessment Grades, we would ask them to bear in mind that knowing the Centre Assessment Grade will not change their final results. If, after due consideration, and having viewed Ofqual's video about the calculated results process (see section 3 above), your child does wish to access their Centre Assessment Grades, they should make a formal request using the submission form which can be accessed through this [link](#).

Parents/carers and students should not attempt to discuss Centre Assessment Grades with individual subject teachers or heads of faculty, as staff will not be able to comment on Centre Assessment Grades.

There will be an opportunity for students to resit an exam in the autumn. A level exams will take place between 5th and 23rd October 2020. GCSE exams will take place between 2nd and 23rd November 2020. The entry deadline for A level exams is Thursday 3rd September 2020 and the entry deadline for GCSE exams is Thursday 17th September 2020. We would advise students considering whether or not to opt for a resit to think very carefully before deciding to do so, and to seek advice from school staff before making this decision.

Please contact me at Farlingaye if you require clarification of any of the information contained in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Andy Sievewright,  
Headteacher**